3: Gooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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melodies, wording, purpose, place, and meaning of many songs and could put the right feeling into their singing. The latter kind of singers were often the ones who taught the former how to sing correctly. One singer might be recognized as competent in religious or certain religious songs only, another for social songs only, and so forth. In each of the categories there were usually "one or several who were by far the best in bringing out this something in the song." Among the qualities of a good singer were and are: volume, clearness, wide range, sense of rhythm and ability to put life and feeling into the singing. Much too depended on "body motions, gestures, bodily interpretation, whole demeanor." Beating time too was an art; "anyone can take a stick and beat a drum but not everyone can beat it just right."

Many of the songs, both ritual and secular, contain words or expressions the meaning of which is not known today, or, although the meaning is known, the words or expressions are no longer in secular use or else differ appreciably in form from those in use.

For some songs, such as solemn religious ones, it was relatively unimportant whether the singer had a good melodious voice or not. In sacred songs the all-important thing was the ability to put the proper feeling into the singing, "to get the hearers to concentrate ears, eyes, mind and heart," whereas the singer who had only a good voice reached only the ears of the hearers.

"The old time songs," The Boy explained, "are very hard. You cannot learn them overnight. It is hard for the Gros Ventres today to learn the old, old songs, and most of the songs I sang for your records are from the old times. Especially difficult are the Flat Pipe songs. They just consume your breath, so to speak. You have to sing them very solemnly and it would not do to shake your voice. They are supposed to be serious. You can notice the difference in singers when several sing together; they [some of them] get out of breath. When Horse Capture was Flat Pipe keeper, at one ceremony he and I sang together, and the old fellow would get tired."

Among the most accomplished Gros Ventre singers of recent times are first of all The Boy himself, to whom we are indebted for 102 of the songs we recorded, and Charles Buckman, who sang 6 for us. The Boy mentioned, too, certain other renowned living